



PHOTO & CAPTION

Community Centers Open Doors



The deputy of the Nangarhar provincial council (center) and other government representatives cut the ribbon to open the Jalalabad City Community Center.

Six new community centers opened their doors this fall to villagers in Nangarhar and Kandahar provinces. The centers are the first of their kind in both provinces, offering citizens access to legal awareness and public outreach resources, along with classes to build technical skills and a space to host community meetings.

More than 60 unpaid volunteers such as teachers, university professors, elders, and local business and government leaders staff the centers. The centers were funded by USAID's Rule of Law Stabilization – Informal Component (RLS-I) project. RLS-I aims to strengthen traditional dispute resolution and the rule of law in Afghanistan.

RLS-I staff worked with the new volunteers on a variety of skills, from operating computers and projectors, to delivering presentations. Volunteers will introduce public outreach materials with messaging via comic books, pamphlets, and multi-media shows on DVD to their communities. These materials address basic citizens' rights under the Afghan Constitution, including education, forced labor, and defendants' rights to legal representation.

Volunteers will continue their training with RLS-I staff at each of the six centers. In Nangarhar Province, the centers opened in Jalalabad City and Behsud and Surkh Rod districts. In Kandahar Province, the new centers are located in Kandahar City and Arghandab and Dand districts. In the future, volunteers will host other types of classes for men and women, including basic English language and computer skills.